

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01 INR-07

L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

USIA-06 DHA-02 IO-13 TRSE-00 /071 W

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FM AMEMBASSY MANAGUA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2760

S E C R E T MANAGUA 1514

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: SHUM, NU

SUBJECT: HUMAN RIGHTS: AMBASSADOR MEETS AGAIN WITH SOMOZA

REF: MANAGUA 1406

1. AMBASSADOR MET WITH PRESIDENT SOMOZA IN HIS OFFICE ON MARCH 30 AT LATTER'S REQUEST. SOMOZA WAS HIGHLY CRITICAL OF THE AMERICAN CAPUCHINS AND PARTICULARLY SALVADOR SCHLAEFER, CAPUCHIN BISHOP OF BLUEFIELDS. HE SHOWED THE AMBASSADOR TWO LETTERS FROM BISHOP SCHLAEFER WRITTEN EARLIER THIS MONTH ASKING SOMOZA TO PROVIDE THE BISHOP WITH THE BASIS FOR GON ACCUSATION THAT FATHER EVARISTO BERTRAND AND BEEN ENGAGED IN QUOTE SUBVERSIVE ACTIVITIES UNQUOTE AND THAT JUSTIFIED DECLARING HIM PERSONA NON GRATA. SOMOZA SAID HE HAD NO INTERNTION OF ANSWERING THE LETTERS WHICH WERE DESIGNED TO ELICIT RESPONES THAT COULD BE USED AGAINST HIS GOVERNMENT. HE ADDED THAT THE BISHOP COULD NOT BE TRUSTED TO MAINTAIN CONFIDENTIAL

HIS PRIVATE COMMUNICATIONS, AND THAT THE CAPUCHINS CONSIDERED THMSELVES ABOVE NICARAGUAN LAW.

2. THE PRESIDENT STATED THAT CONGRESSMAN EDWARD KOCH

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HAD ISSUED A PRESS RELEASE YESTERDAY STATING HIS INTENTION TO OPPOSE ECONOMIC AND MILITARY ASSISTANCE TO NICARAGUA BECAUSE OF GON VIOLATIONS OF HUMAN RIGHTS. AMBASSADOR TOOK THIS OPPORTUNITY TO TELL SOMOZA THAT THE POSSIBILITY OF A GONGRESSIONAL CUTOFF OF U.S. ASSISTANCE ON HUMAN RIGHTS GROUNDS SHOULD NOT BE DISMISSED OR TREATED LIGHTLY. HE POINTED OUT THAT A SPECIAL HEARING ON NICARAGUA WAS PLANNED BY THE

HOUSE APPROPRIATIONS SUBCOMMITTEE ON FOREIGN OPERATIONS FOR APRIL 5. AMBASSADOR EXPLAINED TO SOMOZA THAT THE ESTABLISHMENT OF AN INDEPENDENT AND IMPARTIAL COMMISSION TO INVESTIGATE RECENT ACCUSATIONS OF HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS MADE BY THE BISHOPS AND THE CAPUCHINS WOULD BE VIEWED AS A POSITIVE INITIATIVE BY THE ADMINISTRATION AND THE CONGRESS. IN ADDITION TO THE MERIT OF HAVING AN IMPARTIAL COMMISSION CLARIFY THE ACCURACY OF THE ALLEGATIONS, IT WOULD PLACE THE GON IN A BETTER LIGHT BEFORE THE U.S. CONGRESS AND PUBLIC OPINION. THIS WAS PARTICULARLY IMPORTANT AT THIS TIME WHEN CONGRESSIONAL MOMENTUM SEEMED TO BE BUILDING AGAINST HIS GOVERNMENT.

3. SOMOZA REPLIED THAT THE EXISTENCE OF AN INVESTIGATORY COMMISSION WOULD NOT HALT THE WELL ORCHESTRATED, POLITICALLY MOTIVATED ATTACKS IN THE UNITED STATES AGAINST HIM AND HIS GOVERNMENT. HE ADDED THAT THE NICARAGUAN CONGRESS HAD ESTABLISHED HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSIONS EMPOWERED TO TAKE TESTIMONY. IT WAS, HE SAID, UP TO THESE COMMISSIONS TO ACT. THE AMBASSADOR STATED THAT HE WAS NOT AWARE THAT ANY OF THE COMMISSIONS WERE MAKING A SERIOUS EFFORT TO CALL WITNESSES TO OBTAIN TESTIMONY ON ALLEGATIONS OF HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS. HE STRONGLY URGED SOMOZA TO SUPPORT AN IMPARTIAL INVESTIGATION BUT NO PROMISE WAS FORTHCOMING.

4. LATE AFTERNOON OF MARCH 30 THE AMBASSADOR ALSO SPOKE TO THE PAPAL NUNCIO WHO REPORTED THAT HE HAD CANVASSED MOST BISHOPS AND FOUND THAT MAJORITY FAVORED ANOTHER MEETING WITH SOMOZA. THE NUNCIO TOLD THE AMBASSADOR THAT HE HOPED TO SEE SOMOZA OVER THE NEXT FEW DAYS AND REPEATED
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HIS PROMISE TO RAISE WITH THE PRESIDENT THE QUESTION OF AN IMPARTIAL INVESTIGATION.
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
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Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 31-Mar-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
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TAGS: SHUM, NU, US, (SAMOZA DEBAYLE, ANASTASIO), (THEBERGE, JAMES D), (SCHLAEFER, SALVADOR)
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